

Consultation on proposed changes to Hampshire County Council's Short Break Activities Programme for children with disabilities

Information Pack



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Introduction

The County Council is seeking residents' and stakeholders' views on proposals to change its Short Break Activities Programme.

The consultation opens at midday on 12 March and closes at 23:59pm on 3 June 2018.

Why your views are important

This consultation is an opportunity for people to inform the future of Hampshire's Short Break Activities Programme. This consultation seeks your feedback on a number of proposals for different ways that the Short Break Activities Programme could be provided from April 2019 onwards.

The proposals for change seek to continue to deliver an effective programme that provides good quality breaks for parents and carers of disabled children, and also provides fun and educational opportunities for the children and young people receiving them, within a reduced budget. The proposals could contribute to the Children's Services Department's savings target by up to £1million.

It is important to the County Council that the views of the children and young people, and their families and carers, who may be affected by the proposals, are carefully considered; as well as the views from Hampshire residents and other interested stakeholders.

The findings from this consultation will be published and presented to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services later in 2018. Feedback will be taken into account by the Executive Lead Member when making a decision on the proposed changes to the Short Break Activities Programme.



Serving Hampshire – Balancing the Budget Consultation

By April 2019 the County Council will be facing an anticipated budget shortfall of £140million. The Children's Services Department has a savings target of £30.1million. This is due to national austerity measures, combined with demographic and inflationary pressures. With less money available and growing demand for council services, especially statutory services, tough decisions will need to be made about what the County Council can and cannot do in the future.

The County Council is required by law to deliver a balanced budget and therefore cannot plan to spend more than is available. Hampshire County Council is to address its budget shortfall through a combination of measures including increases in Council Tax and delivering savings from services.

The County Council consulted the public on its financial strategy in the *Serving Hampshire – Balancing the Budget Consultation* in summer 2017, details of which can be found at www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/haveyoursay/consultations/balancingthebudget.

Please note that the County Council is also consulting on policy changes to Home to School Transport, closing on 13 March 2018. Please see www.hants.gov.uk/home-to-school-transport for more information.

The County Council's Consultation Policy

The County Council is committed to five principles of consultation:

- to consult on key issues and proposals
- to consult in good time
- to be inclusive but within clear and appropriate limits
- to consult using clear, simple information
- to ensure responses are taken into account when decisions are made



How to have your say

Accompanying this Information Pack is a Response Form. Please use the Response Form to give us your views on the proposals set out in this Information Pack.

a. Open public consultation

You are invited to give your views on these proposals. We are offering a range of opportunities for everyone to contribute, in order to get as many responses as possible from children and young people, parents and carers, short break activity provider organisations, schools and any other interested stakeholders.

This consultation will run for 12 weeks from **12 March to 3 June 2018**.

Please note that responses received after this date will not be included in the findings report.

You can do this by using the online Response Form at:

www.hants.gov.uk/shortbreakconsultation

The Information Pack and Response Form, along with Easy Read versions of both documents, are available to download and print from the consultation webpage.

If you require a paper copy of the Information Pack or the Response Form, or if you have any queries about the consultation, please contact short.break@hants.gov.uk, or call: **0300 555 1384**.*

This pack contains important information about the proposals which the County Council asks you to read carefully before completing the Response Form.

Please return paper Response Forms in the Freepost envelope provided. If you do not have a Freepost envelope, please post your response to: Freepost HAMPSHIRE and write 'Insight and Engagement Unit' and 'Short Break Consultation' on the back of the envelope.

You can also email your response directly to Hampshire County Council using the email address: short.break@hants.gov.uk

This Information Pack and the Response Form are available in other formats such as large print, audio and Braille. To obtain an alternative format please email Hampshire County Council at: short.break@hants.gov.uk, or call: **0300 555 1384**.*

* 0300 calls are usually included in most landline and mobile call packages, and if not, are charged at no more than a local rate call.

b. Consultation drop-in events for parents and carers

As an additional opportunity for people to take part in the consultation, drop-in events across the county have been arranged. Booking is not required to attend these events.

At the drop-in events you will be able to:

- find out more about the proposals
- talk to Hampshire County Council staff
- pick up a paper copy of the consultation Information Pack and Response Form

Area of county	Date and time	Event type	Venue
Basingstoke	14/03/2018 09:30-11:30	Hampshire Parent Carer Network (HPCN) meet up	Maple Ridge Primary School Maple Crescent RG21 5SX
Andover	16/03/2018 09:00-12:00	Library drop-in	Andover Library Chantry Centre Andover SP10 1LT
Winchester	22/03/2018 09:00-12:00	Library drop-in	Winchester Discovery Centre Jewry Street Winchester SO23 8SB
Whiteley	23/03/2018 09:30-11:30	HPCN meet up	Parsons Collar Rookery Avenue Whiteley PO15 7AJ
Dibden Purlieu	24/03/2018 10:00-15:00	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Information Day	Noadswood School Dibden Purlieu
Fleet	27/03/2018 13:00-16:00	Library drop-in	Fleet Library 236 Fleet Road Fleet GU51 4BX
Gosport	28/03/2018 10:00-12:00	HPCN meet up	Gosport Methodist Centre Stoke Road PO12 1JB
Petersfield	06/04/2018 17:00-19:00	Library drop-in	Petersfield Library 27 The Square Petersfield GU32 3HH

Area of county	Date and time	Event type	Venue
Fareham	17/04/2018 09:00-12:00	Library drop-in	Fareham Library Osborn Road Fareham PO16 7EN
Romsey	19/04/2018 10:00-12:00	HPCN meet up	Youth in Romsey Southampton Road Romsey SO51 8AF
Eastleigh	25/04/2018 13:00-16:00	Library drop-in	Eastleigh Library 1st Floor Swan Centre Eastleigh SO50 5SF
Alresford	27/04/2018 10:00-11:30	HPCN meet up	The Swan Inn 11 West Street Alresford SO24 9AD
Aldershot	03/05/2018 17:00-19:00	Library drop-in	Aldershot Library 109 High Street Aldershot GU11 1DQ
Waterlooville	11/05/2018 09:30-11:30	HPCN meet up	Sacred Heart Church 356 London Road Waterlooville PO7 7SR
Gosport	14/05/2018 13:00-16:00	Library drop-in	Gosport Library High Street Gosport PO12 1BT
Basingstoke	16/05/2018 09:00-12:00	Library drop-in	Basingstoke Library Festival Place Shopping Centre Basingstoke RG21 7LS
Totton	21/05/2018 09:00-12:00	Library drop-in	Totton Library Library Road Totton SO40 3RS
Ringwood	24/05/2018 10:30-12:30	HPCN meet up	The Place (youth centre) Carvers Recreation Ground Ringwood BH24 1JD

c. Consultation events for providers of short break activities

Two events have been arranged to help providers of short break activities find out more about the consultation proposals. Booking is required to attend these events.

Please contact short.break@hants.gov.uk.

Area of county	Date and time	Venue
Winchester	09/05/2018 10:00-12:30	Winchester Discovery Centre Jewry Street Winchester SO23 8SB
Winchester	15/05/2018 10:00-12:30	

d. Young people's focus groups

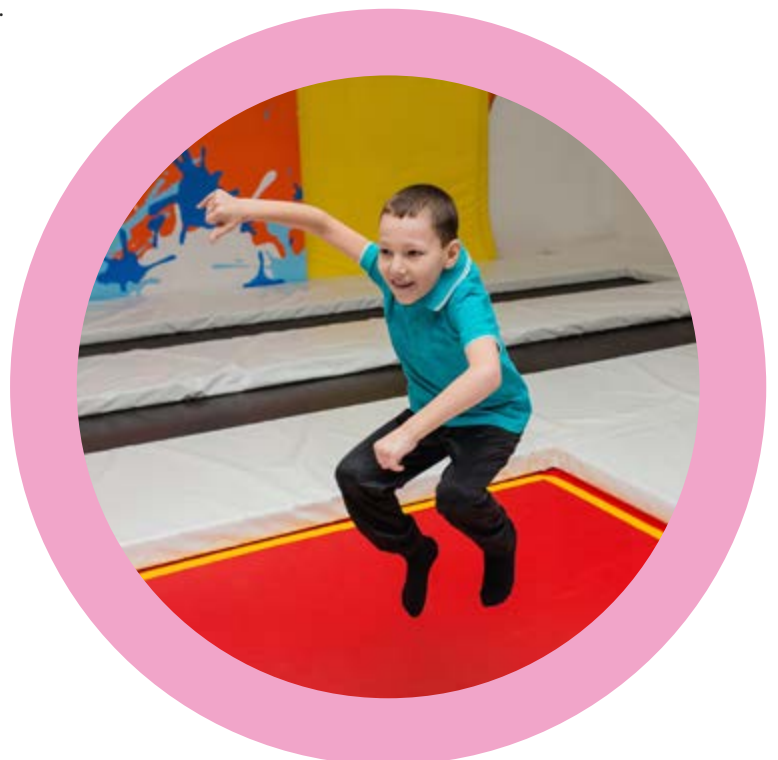
To help young people's participation in the consultation process, we will be working with KIDS' Young People's Engagement Group (YPEG) seeking their views on the proposals in an appropriate manner according to their age and ability.

e. Virtual Question and Answer sessions

There will be two online virtual sessions in which the public can ask questions about the proposed changes. These virtual sessions would allow people to log in via a telephone or a computer.

Details of this can be found on the consultation web page at

www.hants.gov.uk/shortbreakconsultation.



Your data

Hampshire County Council adheres to the requirements of the UK Data Protection legislation. Hampshire County Council is registered on the public register of data controllers which is looked after by the Information Commissioner. The information provided will only be used to understand respondents' views on the proposals set out in this consultation. All individuals' responses will be kept confidential and will not be shared with third parties, but responses from organisations may be published in full. Responses will be stored securely and retained for one year following the end of the consultation before being deleted or destroyed.

Where the information provided is personal information you have certain legal rights. Customers may ask us for the information we hold about them, to rectify inaccurate information we hold about them, to restrict our use of their personal information (this right exists from 25 May 2018) and to erase their personal data. When we use personal information, with the customers' consent, they will also have the right to withdraw their consent to our use of their personal information at any time.

Customers can contact the County Council's Data Protection Officer at data.protection@hants.gov.uk. If customers have a concern about the way we are collecting or using personal data, they should raise that concern with the County Council in the first instance, or directly to the Information Commissioner's Office at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>



Section 1: Background and context

Hampshire County Council is committed to meeting its statutory duties in respect of children with disabilities, and their parents or carers. This consultation is solely focused on proposals for changes to the County Council's Short Break Activities Programme, within the parameters of the statutory duties which apply.

Services which are NOT included in this consultation:

- **Specialist services provided for children with assessed social care needs**

In addition to the Short Break Activities Programme Hampshire County Council also provides a range of specialist support services such as care support, and overnight respite to children and young people who have been assessed by a social worker as having unmet social care needs. At any one time, in the region of 700 children and young people in Hampshire access these services, which are funded from the Children's Services social care budgets. These services are not within the scope of this consultation.

- **Community Buddy Scheme**

The Community Buddy Scheme is funded via a Short Break grant to a single provider who manages the service on behalf of the County Council.

Please note: The County Council would retain some funding for exceptional circumstances.



About the Short Break Activities Programme

Hampshire's Short Break Activities Programme provides support to parents or carers of children and young people with disabilities.

The Short Break Activities Programme seeks to offer a range of fun and educational activities for children and young people with disabilities and additional needs so that their parents or carers can have a short break from their caring responsibilities.

The Short Break Activities Programme also aims to provide parents or carers with the opportunity to take part in education, training, leisure activities, day-to-day tasks and to meet the needs of other children in the family. Short Break Activities are offered during daytimes, evenings, weekends and school holidays.

In 2016/17, 2,045 children accessed the Short Break Activities Programme. These activities are provided by voluntary sector organisations funded via grants, by some special schools directly, and by other community-based services such as sport and leisure centres (collectively referred to as 'providers') which can apply for funding to meet an individual's additional care and support needs.

How Short Break Activities are delivered in Hampshire

There are currently five strands to the Short Break Activities Programme:

- specialist play schemes/youth schemes
- inclusive play schemes/youth schemes
- support for individual disabled children to attend an activity they choose
- activity days and events for whole families
- a Community Buddy Scheme and support for children and young people to access mainstream activities

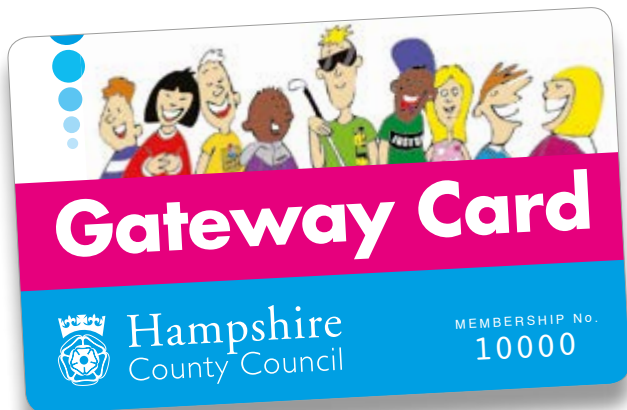
Who is currently eligible to access the Short Break Activities Programme?

Hampshire's Short Break Activities Programme is currently available to children and young people who:

- have a disability or additional needs
- need support to take part in leisure activities
- are between 0 and 19 years old
- live in the Hampshire County Council authority area, and/or
- attend a school in the Hampshire County Council authority area

How do eligible families access the Short Break Activities Programme?

The majority of families currently access the Short Break Activities Programme through the use of a Gateway Card.



The Gateway Card is free and gives eligible families access to activities, play schemes and Buddy schemes through the Short Break Activities Programme. Eligible families need a Gateway Card to use any activities funded by Hampshire's Short Break Activities Programme.

Children are entitled to a Gateway Card if they meet the criteria set out on page 11. Please see

www.hants.gov.uk/gatewaycard

for more information.

How much is the Children's Services department seeking to save?

The Children's Services department (excluding schools) has a savings target of £30.1million, representing an overall budget reduction of 18%.

The 2018/19 budget for Children with Disabilities is £19.5million. The budget comprises:

£16.5million of support to the active cases (as of November 2017) for families eligible for social work support from the Children with Disabilities Teams, plus a Short Break budget of £3million.

£2.4million of the Short Break budget is allocated to provide Short Break Activities, funded via the annual grant process, the Buddy Scheme and support for children and young people to access mainstream activities.

The Children's Services department is seeking to save £3million from the Children with Disabilities budget by April 2019, representing a 15.3% reduction from the 2018/19 budget for Children with Disabilities overall.

Children's Services propose that £1million of the £3 million savings allocated from the Children with Disabilities service, could be achieved through the reshaping of the current Short Break Activities Programme.

After several rounds of budget reductions since 2008, far-reaching savings initiatives to all statutory children's services provided by Hampshire County Council have already been made, or are in progress. Children's Services are now required to look at the Short Break Activities Programme funding in order to achieve further savings. Therefore, the County Council is proposing changes to the ways that the Short Break Activities Programme is delivered, the type of activities that could be funded, and reviewing access to the programme for certain groups of children and young people.

Section 2: Proposed changes to the Short Break Activities Programme

The County Council is proposing to change the ways that the Short Break Activities Programme is delivered. These proposals seek to continue to deliver an effective programme which provides both good quality breaks for parents and carers of disabled children, and also provides fun and educational opportunities for the children and young people receiving them, within a reduced budget. The proposals could contribute to the Children's Services Department's savings target by up to £1million.

A group of representatives from Hampshire Parent Carer Network, Gateway Card holders and Short Break Activities providers took part in sessions to review the delivery of the Short Break Activities Programme. The County Council is grateful for their time and input to those sessions. The proposals in this consultation have been influenced by their contribution.

Proposals relating to eligibility and access

Proposal 1: To commission the Short Break Activities Programme on the basis of priorities, agreed with a representative parent/carer panel

Currently, Short Break Activities funding is awarded to a variety of providers across the county through a system of grants, whereby the County Council is asked to fund a wide range of different activities based on applications from providers.

In order to ensure a more effective, consistent and equitable way of distributing funding, and to ensure there is a sufficient range of activities across the county, this proposal seeks to introduce a new approach to allocating and managing Short Break Activities funding to providers.

It is proposed that applications from prospective Short Break Activities providers are invited against an agreed set of priorities, which would provide specified activities in specific locations, spread across the county, according to demand.

This proposal would enable the County Council to commission (whether through grants or under a tender process) Short Break Activities that are important to families; meeting locally set priorities. This approach would be flexible and take into account changing priorities to ensure the activities that are funded meet the needs of local families.

For parents and carers, this proposal may mean a change in the variety of Short Break Activities available, and their location, in line with demand.

This consultation seeks parents' and carers' views on what activities are important to them, and when and where they would like to be able to access those activities, in order to help the County Council and the parent/carer panel to consider the priorities. For example, priorities could include: group activities, such as a holiday club during the summer holidays; a weekend club on a Saturday; or one-to-one support for a child or young person to access the community throughout the year, such as the support provided by the Buddy Scheme.

This proposal aims to reduce duplication and encourage collaboration between providers. It may mean that some providers lose funding, while others may gain.

It is estimated that by changing the way the Short Break Activity Programme operates and what is commissioned, potential savings of £160,000 could be achieved.

Proposal 2: To require parents and carers to pay in advance for Short Break Activities, and for providers to collect advance payment of parents'/carers' contributions for those activities

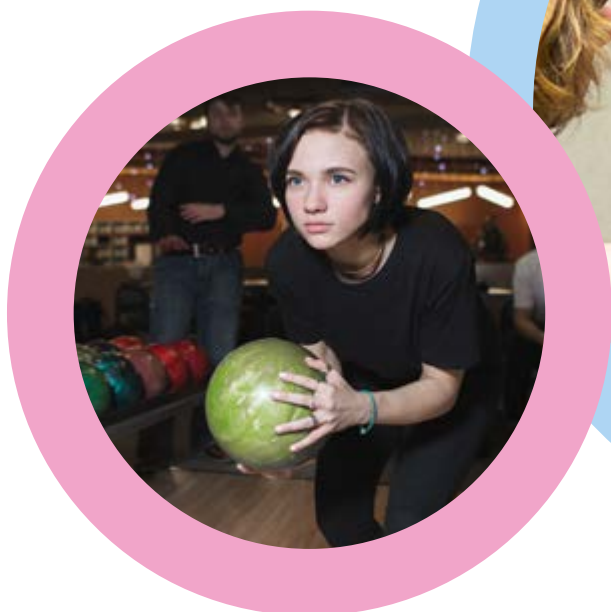
Currently, the practice for parents or carers to make a financial contribution for a child to attend an activity varies from provider to provider. Where a provider does not charge until the day of the activity or invoices after the event, there is no commitment for a child or young person to attend. Providers have told us that this leads to a number of 'no shows' and creates capacity issues for the activity provider.

For parents and carers, this proposal would mean families would have to pay in advance of a child attending activities. The benefit to families is that there would be a guaranteed space. It would also enable those families on the waiting list to be given notice of spaces where cancellations are known in advance.

For providers of Short Break Activities, this proposal would mean that, in accordance with current funding guidance, they would be required to put in place a system that ensures payments, or a deposit, for an activity are taken at the point of booking.

This proposal would allow providers to plan staffing, ratios and activities, as the numbers and needs of young people attending would be known in advance. Providers would need to ensure there is a range of payment options available for families. Providers would also be expected to operate a clear refund policy.

Although this proposal would not result in direct savings, it would enable more effective management of access to activities.



Proposal 3: To require providers of Short Break Activities to apply consistent parental/carer charges and hardship rates

The current Short Break Activities Programme requires families to pay a standard parental/carer contribution for a child to attend a short break activity.

Short Break Activities and services would usually have a cost which parents/carers would be expected to pay, whether a child is disabled or non-disabled. The current guidance to providers is that:

'Parents of disabled children can be expected to pay the standard amount for a similar activity for all children in that local area.'

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/grants/childrens-services-grants/short-break-activity-grant.htm>

Short Break Activities funding would be available for the additional costs that may arise due to a child's disability and/or additional needs.

Currently, the guidance on parental and carer contributions is not applied consistently by providers. Some providers do not charge anything at all; others ask for a voluntary donation or charge the absolute minimum; and others charge in accordance with the current guidance. This proposal would require all providers to charge parents and carers the same standard rate for Short Break Activities, in line with the cost to a non-disabled child accessing a similar activity.

At present, providers also determine their own hardship criteria, and how it is applied: some providers have no hardship policy at all, some have an informal process and some require a written application.

This proposal would also aim to standardise and require providers to apply a consistent hardship policy to all Short Break Activities. The County Council would ensure that providers offer a hardship rate against an agreed policy that would ensure those in receipt of income-related benefits such as Income Support, Child or Working Tax Credits, Job Seekers' Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance are not charged.

For some parents and carers, this proposal could increase the current charge to access some Short Break Activities. Fees could vary according to the type and length of activity.

For providers of Short Break Activities, this proposal could increase the amount of income they receive, and could reduce the level of County Council funding to the provider.

By ensuring the parental/carer charges and the hardship rates are applied consistently it is estimated there could be potential savings of £230,000.

Proposals relating to the reform of the Gateway Card system

Proposal 4: To move to a new online Gateway Card application system

Currently, children and young people are able to access Short Break Activities upon presentation of a Gateway Card. There are approximately 9,500 Gateway Card holders, but only around 2,000 actively use them.

The County Council is proposing to introduce a new online application system for the administration of Gateway Cards.

To ensure accuracy of the Gateway Card data, all current Gateway Card holders would be asked to reapply for the new card.

For those unable to complete the application process online, the application process could be completed by providers on behalf of families, through Early Help Hubs or over the telephone with the County Council.

It is proposed that Gateway Cards would be provided electronically and would be accessible to card holders and/or their families on mobile telephones, or over the internet, as a print at home card. A physical card would be provided by the County Council where there is a specific need.

Gateway Card holders would be asked if there are any changes to their circumstances every 12 months. It is also proposed that Gateway Cards are time limited and expire after a set period of time, at which point a new application would need to be made and evidence of eligibility provided (see Proposal 5). This would ensure that the County Council has up to date information about children's needs, which would then inform the future commissioning of activities. As far as possible, the new system would be automated, aiming to reduce the administrative burden for both parents/carers, and the County Council.

For parents and carers, this proposal would mean a requirement to apply for, and use a Gateway Card, in order to access Short Break Activities. This consultation seeks parents'/carers' views on the time period in which Gateway Card holders should reapply for a Gateway Card.

For providers of Short Break Activities, this proposal would mean that they would be required to capture details of all Gateway Card holders accessing Short Break Activities, and regularly provide access information to the County Council.

Whilst this proposal would not make a specific saving, this could support the effective management of service delivery through:

- clarity of process for parents and carers
- maintenance of current and up-to-date information about Gateway Card holders
- better understanding of demand
- improved ease of application and use
- a streamlined monitoring process for providers

Proposal 5: To require evidence of eligibility from a professional as part of the new Gateway Card application to access the Short Break Activities Programme

The current application process for a Gateway Card does not require any formal evidence of a child's needs, condition or diagnosis. It is proposed that the County Council would require evidence of eligibility in so far as the young person:

- has a disability or additional needs, and/or
- needs support to take part in leisure activities

Acceptable forms of evidence could include:

- a letter from family's General Practitioner (GP) or Health Visitor
- a letter from Child's Teacher/Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)
- evidence of being in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- confirmation of Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), or
- evidence from an other associated professional involved with the family

For parents and carers, this proposal would mean all existing Gateway Card holders and new applicants would need to provide evidence of eligibility in order to access the funded Short Break Activities Programme. There may be additional effort required in order to obtain a copy of the evidence to confirm the child's needs/disability and there may be costs associated with this; such as obtaining a letter from the GP. However, there may be other sources of evidence which would not incur a charge.

Whilst this proposal would not make a specific saving, this may support:

- reliable and accurate data being held about Gateway Card users, particularly in terms of current needs, which would inform future commissioning
- ensure those accessing the Short Break Activities Programme are eligible to do so



Proposals to bring the Short Break Activities Programme in line with statutory requirements

Proposal 6: From 1 April 2019, to stop funding Short Break Activities for young people aged 18 and over

The Short Break Activities Programme is currently open to children and young people aged 0-19 years. In 2016/17, 89 18-20 year olds accessed the Short Break Activities Programme.

It is proposed to stop funding under the Short Break Activities Programme for young people once they reach 18 years of age, bringing the provision in line with the County Council's statutory responsibilities, and consistent with the majority of Hampshire's neighbouring local authorities.

For parents and carers of young people aged 18 and over, who are currently accessing Short Break Activities, this proposal could mean that they need to seek alternative arrangements.

It is proposed that families affected by this proposal would be contacted by the Adults' Health and Care department to carry out an assessment.

If a family with a disabled young person who is nearly 18, or recently turned 18, chose to move to live within the Hampshire County Council authority area, then they would be advised to discuss what support would be available from the Adults' Health and Care department.

It is estimated this could save the Children's Services department £228,000.

Case study

Samuel will be 18 years old in May 2019. Samuel has a physical disability and has been attending an arts and crafts club four times a year, funded by the Short Break Activities Programme. Under this proposal, in May 2019, Samuel's options would include:

- to stop attending the arts and crafts club
- to speak with the provider of the Short Break Activity to see if they agree to Samuel continuing to attend the club, with Samuel paying the full cost of the activity
- to discuss the family's needs when contacted by the Adults' Health and Care department

Proposal 7: That Short Break Activities would only be funded for children who live in the Hampshire County Council authority area

Currently, the County Council funds Short Break Activities for children who live in the Hampshire County Council authority area and/or children who go to school in the Hampshire County Council authority area.

In 2016/17, 48 children accessed the Hampshire County Council Short Break Activities Programme who attend Hampshire schools but do not live in the Hampshire County Council authority area.

Local authorities are only responsible for providing and funding short breaks for those children and families who live within their area.

It is proposed that children and young people, and their parents and carers, who live outside the Hampshire County Council authority area would no longer receive a Short Break Activities service funded by Hampshire County Council. This would be consistent with the majority of Hampshire's neighbouring local authorities.

It is estimated that the potential saving could be £62,500.

Case study

Emma lives in Surrey with her parents. Emma has a learning disability and attends a special school in Farnborough, Hampshire. Emma has been attending a club for children with disabilities funded by Hampshire County Council's Short Break Activities funding alongside some friends from school. Under this proposal, as Emma and her family do not live in the Hampshire County Council authority area, Hampshire would no longer fund Emma to attend the club. Emma's parents would need to contact Surrey County Council to understand their Short Break Activities Programme to identify a short break provision. One option might be to request that Surrey County Council pay for Emma to carry on attending the club.

Proposals to define a 'short break'

Proposal 8: To only fund Short Break Activities which allow parents and carers to leave their child

The Short Break Activities Programme is designed to enable parents and carers to have a break from caring and support them to do things such as attend training, education or regular leisure activities, provide care for other members of the family or run their household. It should also be used to support families where they are struggling to find the capacity to care for their disabled child without a short break; and where the provision of a short break would clearly enable a carer to provide more effective parenting and care.

For parents and carers, this proposal would mean that Short Break Activities where the whole family can attend, or those activities where parents/carers are **required by the Short Break Activities provider to stay**, would **not** be funded by the Short Break

Activities Programme. In the last year, examples of activities which have required parents/carers to stay with the child have included: some multi-activity clubs, swimming lessons, sensory sessions, climbing, family fun days, drama clubs, horse handling and the daytime elements of family activity weekends. This proposal does not include time-limited transition or settling in periods where parents/carers may need/want to stay for a short period of time to support their child to attend a new activity.

For providers, this proposal would mean that about 960 funded activity sessions would no longer be funded from April 2019.

It is estimated that the potential saving could be £213,000.

Proposal 9: To stop funding swimming lessons as a short break activity

The County Council wants to ensure that parents and carers receive a short break that is sufficient to meet their need for a break. As parents and carers are generally required to stay with their child in the pool during the swimming lesson, and the swimming lesson is for a relatively short duration, it is proposed that this does not offer parents and carers a chance to have a break from caring.

The County Council recognise that swimming is a life skill. However, swimming lessons are a part of the national curriculum, and usually arranged by schools.

In 2017/18, and looking ahead to 2018/19, there are 500 sessions funded to provide swimming lessons.

For parents/carers, children and young people, and swimming lesson providers this proposal would mean that from April 2019, swimming lessons would no longer be funded by the Short Break Activities Programme. Short Break Activities Programme funding may continue to be available for support to individuals to go to a swimming pool as a leisure activity, if that is considered to be a priority (see Proposal 1).

It is estimated this could achieve potential savings of £107,000.

Other options considered and rejected

The Children's Services department have also looked at a range of other options to achieve savings which have been rejected.

To limit the amount of funding that can be requested from the County Council by providers and require them to seek other sources of income (not just parental/carer fees) to specified levels (for example, the County Council would only fund 60% of the costs for delivering a specified activity).

Rejected: Identification of a source of funding, other than the County Council is already a grant criteria. It is considered that there could be a high risk to the sustainability of smaller providers if this was strictly enforced to a specified level, and could disproportionately impact on some providers. Therefore, it has been rejected.

To introduce match funding by providers as a requirement, such as a 50:50 split.

Rejected: Whatever funding providers request from the County Council, they would have to raise the same level of funding themselves from other sources to be eligible for a grant. Match funding requirements were considered unrealistic for providers to achieve. Therefore, it has been rejected.

To cap the allocation of short break sessions to families, limiting the number of hours/sessions individual families can access.

Rejected: This would not take into account the individual needs of families if sessions were allocated by a fixed number. This could also lead to some families not using all their session allocation, with other families not receiving enough sessions. This would result in increased administrative costs to the County Council.

To develop a targeted offer, with a minimum number of sessions around holiday and weekend clubs, and commissioning only a minimum number in each district area of the county.

Rejected: This could reduce the variety and number of Short Break Activities available.

To prioritise group activities over those that are delivered to a single child, ensuring that the Programme offers best value for money and good outcomes for the greatest number of children and young people.

Rejected: It is recognised that a range of Short Break Activities are necessary to meet the range of needs families may have.

To introduce more targeted eligibility criteria for families to be able to access Short Breaks.

Rejected: There are concerns about how those families in greatest need would be identified and how the process would be managed and monitored.

Options considered and rejected continued

To stop funding for after school clubs and to look to schools to subsidise these clubs.

Rejected: This option is not feasible in the light of pressures on school budgets.

To appoint a single strategic partner for the delivery of the Short Break Activities Programme.

Rejected: No significant benefits of this approach were identified.

To reduce rental payments by providers to schools.

Rejected: This was not considered to be feasible in the light of pressures on school budgets.

To stipulate that Direct Payments be used for families to purchase Short Breaks themselves.

Rejected: This would increase the administrative burden on parents/carers, and would merely shift the financial pressure from one area of funding in Children's Services to another.



Have your say

Thank you for reading through this Information Pack.

You are invited to give your views on these proposals.

This consultation will run for 12 weeks from **12 March to 3 June 2018**.

Please note that responses received after this date will not be included in the findings report.

You can do this by using the online Response Form at:

www.hants.gov.uk/shortbreakconsultation

If you have any queries about this consultation, please contact Hampshire County Council at:

short.break@hants.gov.uk,

or call: **0300 555 1384**.*

The findings from this consultation will be published and presented to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services later in the year, for consideration of a decision on final proposals for changes to services for children with disabilities.



* 0300 calls are usually included in most landline and mobile call packages, and if not, are charged at no more than a local rate call.

